

June 18, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Through: Ms. Beth Freeman, Regional Director
FEMA Region VII
9221 Ward Parkway, Suite 300
Kansas City, MO 64114

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5206 (Stafford Act), as implemented by 44 CFR § 206.36, I request that you declare a major disaster for the State of Iowa as a result of flooding along the Missouri River and its tributaries beginning on May 25 and continuing. The flooding in six Iowa counties has forced hundreds of evacuations and significantly impacted the levee system on the Missouri River Basin. The following Iowa counties along 215 miles of the Missouri River have been severely impacted to date: Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Monona, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) began increasing the outflow at Gavin's Point, near Yankton, South Dakota in May. On June 14, 2011 the outflow reached a record rate of 150,000 cubic feet per second, over twice the previous record outflow set in 1997. This increased output from Gavin's Point has already forced the Missouri River out of its bank over 2 miles in some places in Iowa. The USACE plans to maintain the increased output into August and projects in Iowa the Missouri River will flood out of its banks as much as 8 miles. Evacuees will not be able to return to what is left of their homes, farms and business for months. Roads will be closed and rail traffic will be interrupted for several weeks if not months.

This flooding will easily be exacerbated by rainfall into the basin and continued snow melt. The National Weather Service (NWS) three-month outlook shows a 40% chance for above average rainfall in the Missouri River Basin. The flow rate of the Missouri River is backing up tributaries and raising water tables, both of which will cause additional problems.

In response to the situation, I have taken appropriate actions under State law and directed the execution of the Iowa Emergency Response Plan on May 25, 2011 in accordance with Section 401 of the Stafford Act. On May 31, 2011, J. Derek Hill, Administrator of the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division formally requested the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, provide technical assistance and advanced measures for the communities along the Missouri River basin. Both the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD) and Iowa National Guard have placed liaisons in each affected county emergency operations center. A State of Iowa Proclamation of Disaster Emergency was issued on June 2, 2011 for Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Monona, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury Counties.

As the Missouri River levels began to rise, municipalities and counties, aided by state agencies and the USACE, were preparing for a sustained flood. Citizens, business and industries also made preparations. Levee walkers have detected weak spots in the levee system in all affected counties and emergency repairs have been initiated. Several levees in all counties are at risk of failure. Of particular concern is the 28 miles of levees protecting Council Bluffs. Council Bluffs has prepared an evacuation plan for the 10,000 residents that live in the protected area.

Levee 575 (L575) located near the city of Hamburg, Fremont County, Iowa began to erode and more resources were needed to reinforce it in order to protect critical infrastructure. To protect Hamburg, USACE began construction of a secondary levee known as Ditch 6, while also reinforcing L575. On June 13, 2011, L575 experienced a breach that could not be repaired, USACE, state, local, and private resources were shifted to expedite the completion of Ditch 6. Flood waters reach Ditch 6 on June 16, 2011.

On June 14, 2011, I requested a joint federal, state, and local preliminary damage assessment for Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Monona, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury counties. Listed below are the types of affected facilities and the adverse affects to the public and private sectors:

- **Fatalities/Injuries:** On June 7, 2011 a 34-year old man from Sioux City, Woodbury County, Iowa suffered a fatal heart attack after sandbagging.
- **Functional Needs:** The Iowa Behavioral Health Response Team was activated by the Iowa Department of Human Services. Currently, teams are going door-to-door in the affected areas stressing the importance of evacuation, providing citizens with information on the location of shelters, and conducting general health and welfare checks. For planning purposes, the teams are also identifying functional needs and high risk populations. Specifically, in the Council Bluffs/Pottawattamie County area, it has been determined that 60 percent of the homes canvassed are classified as below the poverty level and the majority of affected residents are over the age 65. The Department of Human Services is maintaining contact with the Iowa Concern Hotline which reports it is receiving a large number of calls from citizens with stress and anxiety.
- **Sheltering:** As of this date, the American Red Cross (ARC) has opened five shelters throughout the affected area and identified locations for additional shelters.

Currently, there are approximately 500 persons evacuated from the six counties. All evacuations were voluntary with the exception of the city of Hamburg, Fremont County, Iowa where a mandatory evacuation was ordered on June 14, 2011. I anticipate that additional people will evacuate each day.

Those displaced from their homes will need temporary housing for months even after the water recedes.

- Agriculture: Agriculture production systems will see considerable economic losses this year due to flooding. Also, farmers face reduced yields in future crop years due to sediment, erosion and damage to drainage and irrigation systems. Below are points illustrating these issues:
 - Iowa crop land along the Missouri River is highly productive (average yield of 200 bushel corn per acre).
 - There will be no opportunity for producers to re-plant the 2011 crop.
 - Production infrastructure such as grain bins, equipment sheds, wells, irrigation systems, and other assets that survive the flood must be cleaned and repaired before the farm can return to full operation.
 - Sediment remaining after the flood (Farrow Syndrome) has historically proven to temporarily reduce yield potential. Also, producers may have to contend with large piles of sand. After flooding in 2008, sand and sediment piles covered agriculture lands and had to be removed prior to reuse of the land.
 - Fremont County, as is the case in most of Iowa's 99 counties, has an economy heavily dependent on agriculture. In Hamburg, all agricultural enterprises have ceased operations. Major manufacturing and grain operating employers have shut down due to rail closures or flooding leaving at least 65 employees without work. Two implement dealers have moved their inventory to an adjacent county shifting 85 jobs in service and sales from Hamburg.
- Utilities: On June 6, 2011 the Fort Calhoun Nuclear Power Station, located near Blair, Nebraska, across the Missouri River from Harrison County, Iowa declared a Notice of Unusual Event because of the high river levels. The plant was already shut down for scheduled refueling, and was scheduled to restart the week of June 13, 2011. The plant remains shut down and at Notice of Unusual Event classification level at this time. Officials at the plant are estimating a loss of \$1 million each day the plant remains shut down. Many employees live in Iowa.

Power, natural gas, sewer, and domestic water services are threatened in several communities. At present, Iowa Electric Cooperatives report 375 customers without power in the affected areas. Mid American Energy reports 980 customers without electric and/or gas service at this time.

On June 13, 2011, MidAmerican Energy activated backup power generation to continue service to approximately 630 customers in the Honey Creek, Pottawattamie County, Iowa area.

MidAmerican Energy's Neal Energy Center power plant is located along the Missouri River near Salix, Woodbury County, Iowa. The plant produces approximately 1,000 megawatts of power per day. MidAmerican Energy has implemented its flood plan for the plant and hopes to remain operational. The plan includes deploying Hesco barriers around the plant, and the construction of earthen berms around substations. Additionally, even though, MidAmerican Energy's Walter Scott, Jr. Energy Center near Council Bluffs, Pottawattamie County, Iowa, was built above the expected crest level, rising waters have required equipment to be moved.

- **Special Teams:** HSEMD deployed a three-member Advance Team from the Sioux City Urban Search and Rescue Team to Council Bluffs, Pottawattamie County, Iowa to assist with catastrophic evacuation planning, additionally, the Incident Management Team (IMT) is being deployed to the Pottawattamie County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to assist with planning and to supplement the incident command structure in the Council Bluffs EOC.
- **Road Closures/Transportation:** Due to flooding a large number of roads have been closed, impacting ambulance and other emergency service vehicles. This has also affected mail delivery in many areas of the counties. Flooding has forced the closure of five post offices in Modale (Harrison County), Blencoe (Monona County), Percival and Hamburg (Fremont County), and Pacific Junction (Mills County)

Several major travel and trade routes traverse the affected areas including:

- Several miles of Interstate 29 have been closed due to flooding and traffic is being re-routed through Interstate 35 in Des Moines, Iowa. There is a detour of approximately 128 miles between Kansas City, Missouri, and Sioux City, Iowa. This causes commercial, private, and emergency assistance traffic to incur additional costs and driving time. The State is incurring additional traffic control costs.

Interstate 29 extends from the Mexican border to the Canadian border. Nearly 152 miles of Interstate 29 is in Iowa running through all 6 flooded counties. 170,800 vehicles per day travel Interstate 29 in Iowa, with approximately 20% of those being commercial trucks. This detour will affect business along Interstate 29 that have not been closed by the flood.

- **Passenger Rail Service:** Service was suspended on Amtrak's California Zephyr line between Chicago, Illinois to Denver, Colorado starting on June 10, 2011, due to flooding. The California Zephyr line extends from Chicago, Illinois to Emeryville, California, travelling the length of Iowa and crossing the Missouri River near Council Bluffs, Iowa. Service is presently being terminated in Creston, Iowa, with passengers being transported via bus to Omaha, Nebraska to re-board trains to their final destinations. This is causing additional costs to Amtrak, its passengers, and delays in travel.

- Commercial Rail Service: Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad has closed its lines in Mills and Fremont counties, and is currently under a rail embargo due to flooding. Rail traffic is being re-routed through Des Moines, Iowa. The economic impact of rerouting rail traffic includes additional rail fuel costs, personnel transport and displacement, and delayed deliveries.

BNSF serves several grain elevators in the affected area, including five in Council Bluffs, and two in Sioux City. BNSF operates 673 miles of track across Iowa. BNSF transports mostly coal, food products, grain, chemicals, and fertilizers in Iowa.

In an attempt to stay in service as flood waters continue to rise, Union Pacific is working on raising the rail lines throughout the affected area. Raising the lines on the Sioux City Subdivision (Sioux City, Woodbury County, Iowa to Missouri Valley, Harrison County, Iowa) and Omaha Subdivision (Missouri Valley, Harrison County, Iowa to Council Bluffs, Pottawattamie County, Iowa) is causing additional manpower and material costs, as well as, cargo delivery delays.

Union Pacific crews dumped ballast on June 13, 2011, on the Blair Subdivision (Blair, Nebraska to Missouri Valley, Harrison County, Iowa) in preparation for raising additional tracks.

Union Pacific Railroad lines enter Iowa near Sioux City, Woodbury County, and run parallel to Interstate 29, branching off into Nebraska near Blair, Nebraska, and again near Council Bluffs, Pottawattamie County, Iowa. Union Pacific hauls over a quarter-million rail cars on 1,435 miles of track through the state, exporting mostly grain meals and oils from Iowa, and importing mostly coal into the state. The railroad employs 2,042 Iowans. Rail service to MidAmerican Energy's Neal Energy Center is also threatened, which would reduce the time that the coal-fired power plant will be able to continue service.

- State/County Parks: Approximately \$668,169 in potential revenues is at risk of being lost if the following parks are closed or remain closed through Labor Day due to flooding. This estimate does not take into account time needed to clean and repair campgrounds from flood damage. Parks either already closed, or at risk of closure include: Waubonsie State Park, Pony Creek County Park, Lewis & Clark State Park, Huff-Warner County Access Area, Lake Manawa State Park, Wilson Island State Recreation Area, Brown's Lake County Park, and Snyder Bend County Park.

In the past four years, Iowa has suffered eleven presidentially declared disasters, resulting in over \$2.87 billion in disaster assistance. These disasters represent \$184,062,406 in State cost-sharing burden to the State of Iowa. The six counties I am requesting this declaration for have suffered between one and five disasters in the last four years.

- In 2008, the State of Iowa experienced its most significant disaster. This disaster began on May 25, 2008 when the town of Parkersburg was struck by an EF5 tornado followed by floods that affected much of the State. Eighty-five counties were included in that federally declared disaster. As a result of the widespread devastation, it was necessary to implement first-time programs and initiatives to assist in the recovery and in some areas of the State, recovery efforts are still ongoing. Although these measures were necessary, the cost-sharing commitment for state and local governments was extremely burdensome.
- In the summer of 2009, Iowa experienced a one-county federally declared declaration. Black Hawk County was made eligible for the Public Assistance Program as a result of severe storms that brought straight line winds to the Waterloo and Cedar Falls areas. The total dollar amount of damage for that one-county declaration is \$8,303,005 and represents 80 project worksheets.
- The 2009-2010 winter season was recorded as the second wettest season with 69 inches of snow received. This snowfall amount broke the 2008 record of 59.23; Iowa received three federal declarations for winter storms between January 2008 and March 2010.
- In the summer of 2010, while still recovering from the 2008 historic disaster, and the winter storms, 63 of Iowa's 99 counties again experienced record flooding, severe storms, and tornadoes.
- Monona County's small town of Mapleton was struck by an EF3 tornado on April 9 of this year. This tornado devastated 352 homes and businesses and, as a result of this storm damage, Harrison, Monona and Woodbury Counties were included on a Small Business Administration Physical Disaster Declaration on April 26, 2011. These damages have caused additional strain and trauma to these counties.

The following information is furnished on the nature and amount of state and local resources that have been or will be used to alleviate the conditions of this disaster:

- The State Emergency Operations Center was activated on May 25, 2011, and was staffed by the operations section and public information staff of the HSEMD as well as the 24-hour duty officer.

Other departments and agencies were activated and their primary functions were as follows:

- Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) provided personnel and heavy equipment to transport sand and sandbags, provided staging areas for potable water, and provided up-to-date and projected road closure information.
- Iowa Department of Human Services provided a liaison to the Pottawattamie County EOC and State EOC and the Iowa Behavioral Health Response Team provided outreach relating to evacuation in the affected counties.
- Iowa Department of Public Health maintained the Health Alert Network (HAN) and identified health-related assets/resources available in the affected area.

- Iowa Department of Natural Resources provided technical assistance for fixed facility hazardous materials sites.
- Iowa Department of Public Safety/Iowa State Patrol assisted with security missions, supported traffic control points, and provided the State Emergency Operations Center with aerial photography of the affected area.
- Iowa National Guard provided 192 personnel for levee patrol, protective measures, security, public safety, and provided aircraft. They also assisted with reinforcing levees, and the completion of the secondary levee (Ditch 6) at Hamburg.
- Iowa Utilities Board provided information on the Rural Utilities and their customers and outages.
- National Weather Service provided weather forecasts for impacted areas and historical data.
- Iowa Department of Corrections provided inmates to assist with sandbagging efforts and temporary levee repairs.
- Mid American Energy provided information on their areas of service and their customers and outages as well as the areas of critical infrastructure.
- The Iowa Concern Hotline was established for citizens to call with questions and concerns.
- Iowa HSEMD established the following Working Groups:
 - Rescue Mission Working Group to coordinate efforts in the event of a levee failure and to deal with pets in need of rescuing;
 - Security Working Group if there was a need to secure areas that have been evacuated and traffic control;
 - Housing Working Groups to work temporary and long-term housing issues for those who may become displaced.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provided technical and direct assistance resource support to the six counties.
- The United States Department of Agriculture approved waiver for the Woman, Infants, and Children (WIC) program.
- County Emergency Management Agencies activated their Emergency Operations Centers and coordinated resources and information at the local level and through the State Emergency Operations Center.

I have determined this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local governments and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary. I am specifically requesting Public Assistance for categories A and B in the counties of Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Monona, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury Counties. I am also requesting Hazard Mitigation “Statewide”.

Preliminary estimates of the types and amount of assistance needed under the Stafford Act are tabulated in Enclosure B and D. The Governor’s Certification is included in Enclosure D.

I certify that for this major disaster, the state and local governments will assume all applicable non-federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act. Total non-federal expenditures are expected to exceed \$3,235,750 in accordance with the table in Enclosure D.

The State of Iowa has been proactive in hazard mitigation planning activities for many years. The State's planning process is driven by Section 322 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) and is synchronized through the coordination and integration of local hazard mitigation planning with interagency planning of the State Hazard Mitigation Team. The State has an approved Enhanced State Mitigation Plan through September 18, 2013.

We will be requesting direct federal assistance:

1. Appropriate shelter supplies (food, water, generators, cots) to support long-term shelter operations if the need arises. This would be the capability to support two (2) high density population centers in different quadrants of the State.
2. One (1) swift water rescue team and appropriate support on the Missouri River.
3. Temporary housing units (THUs).

In accordance with 44 CFR § 206.208, the State of Iowa agrees that it will, with respect to direct federal assistance:

1. Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements and rights-of-ways necessary to accomplish the approved work;
2. Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the requested work, and shall indemnify the federal government against any claims arising from such work;
3. Provide reimbursement to FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work in accordance with the provisions of the FEMA-State Agreement; and
4. Assist the performing federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.

In addition, I anticipate the need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health, and safety.

Pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b & 5173, the State agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.

I have designated Patrick J. Hall as the State Coordinating Officer for this request. He will work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency in damage assessments and may provide further information or justification on my behalf.

Sincerely,

Terry E. Branstad

Governor

Enclosures

ENCLOSURE B TO MAJOR DISASTER REQUEST

Estimated Requirements for Public Assistance
Under the Stafford Act

CATEGORY

County (6)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total
Fremont	\$5,917,227	\$65,189						\$5,982,416
Harrison		\$188,201						\$188,201
Mills	\$114,643	\$983,753						\$1,098,396
Monona	\$17,333	\$57,000						\$74,333
Pottawattamie	\$1,860,000	\$1,290,453						\$3,150,453
Woodbury	\$38,827	\$1,375,461						\$1,414,288
Statewide		\$1,034,915						\$1,034,915
TOTALS	\$7,948,030	\$4,994,972						\$12,943,002

Note: Estimates are to reflect total eligible costs before any cost sharing.

ENCLOSURE D TO MAJOR DISASTER REQUEST

Governor's Certification

I certify that for this current disaster, State and local government expenditures and obligations will include the non-Federal share and costs required by the Stafford Act. As stated in my basic letter, and based on information available at this time, tabulation of these estimated expenditures and obligations are as follows:

CATEGORY OF ASSISTANCE	AMOUNT	
	STATE	LOCAL
Individual Assistance:		
“Other Assistance” under the Individual and Households Program	\$ 0	\$ 0
Other (specify)		
Total:	\$0	\$0
Public Assistance:		
Category A – Debris Removal	\$ 794,803	\$ 1,192,204
Category B – Emergency Protective Measures	\$ 499,497	\$ 749,246
Category C – Roads and Bridges	\$	\$
Category D – Water Control Facilities	\$	\$
Category E – Buildings and Equipment	\$	\$
Category F – Utilities	\$	\$
Category G – Other (Parks, Recreational Facilities, etc.)	\$	\$
Total:	\$ 1,294,300	\$ 1,941,450
Grand Total:	\$ 1,294,300	\$1,941,450